

## Presidents Report to the Board of Trustees - First Unitarian Society of New Jersey

October 11th, 2020

Things are picking up as the church year progresses.

Moving forward, there are some priorities that the Board will need to consider. There are not meant as Agenda items (although some of them are in fact on our agenda) but rather as a frame for the Board to start to use in our work.

We are a small congregation, and doing well as such, but I have some questions in mind for the Board in terms of what our leadership role is:

- Can we sustain this remote worship model through the church year, and what will this mean for growth - Specifically, there are families whose participation has dropped to zero during this time. How can we reconnect with these people?
- Our social media presence is growing slowly (thanks to Melissa now posting our services on YouTube. It's time to resume looking outward for ways to connect with people. Who is best suited to lead this effort?
- Our board members each have their own spheres of responsibility, but we should think about some time devoted to talking **together** about our future as a congregation, and identifying "champions" who can carry our ministry forward. Email is slow and clunky, but some sort of Board Chat might be interesting. Should we try for a retreat, or something less structured?
- Our connections with the larger U.U. region are still strong, but many of our congregation members don't have a sense of belonging. How can we foster these connections?

I know - These questions feel overwhelming... I'm not asking because I expect answers, or even immediate actions. I'm asking because I think the answers determine what we do with the resources (human, financial) that we have.

On a more mundane note - I've been involved in the following committees/groups.

- **Worship Committee** - Participated in worship planning committee and attended worship services. Maintained weekly service Announcements.
- **Small-group Ministry** meetings.
  - My Small-group has changed meeting times to accommodate the school-year schedule of the members. It will now be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month.
- **8th Principle Working Group**

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- Assisted Denise in planning and leading the first Zoom meeting of the 8th Principle (Anti-racism) Group on October 5th.
  - Attended ARE (Allies for Racial Equality ) Community Caucus on Sept 12.
- **Atheist Agnostic Humanist Group** - Coordinated the first online meeting on Sept 21. - Presented a talk titled “Secularism in the Age of Trump”
- Helped plan and presided over Sept congregational meeting to vote to ordain Mareen - Participated in planning her Ordination ceremony for Oct.
- Working with Charlie as Tech liaison.
  - Setting myself up as a backup with some Administrative privileges.
  - Gain access for Sarah to the Board archives and her email account.
- Communicating with Ann Marie on an ongoing basis regarding Board action items.

Moving forward, I expect to focus on the following:

- Contact Fanwood Presbyterian
  - To negotiate our lease renewal.
  - To discuss the maintenance use and storage of our equipment while we are not in the chapel.
- Continue to work with Charlie to organize our information storage and communications flow.
- Work with Sarah to access the archive and also to distribute a list of Board responsibilities (at her request).
- Continue to attend groups and committees as above.

**Thank you, as always for your service and dedication to our congregation!**

Submitted Oct 11, 2020

Chris Baglieri